



AMERICAN SOCIETY OF SAFETY ENGINEERS

Nutmeg Chapter

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I am Walter B. Tucker Jr., a Certified Safety Professional® and Construction Health & Safety Technician. I'm president of the American Society of Safety Engineers' Nutmeg Chapter, and a member of ASSE's Construction Practice Specialty, as well as the Connecticut Safety Society, and the safety committees of the Connecticut Construction Industries Assn., and the Connecticut Associated Builders and Contractors. I have more than 30 years' experience in occupational safety and health, much of it in the construction industry.

I write in support of Committee Bill 155, An Act Requiring Training In Highway Work Zone Safety, but would offer one notable improvement regarding training for police officers.

The U.S. Dept. of Transportation, at 23 CFR 630.1008(d), requires that states that accept federal funding for highway projects "shall require that personnel involved in the development, design, implementation, operation, inspection, and enforcement of work zone related transportation management and traffic control be trained, appropriate to the job decisions each individual is required to make. States shall require periodic training updates that reflect changing industry practices and State processes and procedures."

Highway workers, as defined by 23 CFR 360.1004, "include, but are not limited to, personnel of the contractor, subcontractor, DOT, utilities, and law enforcement, performing work within the right-of-way of a transportation facility."

The Manual of Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD) is the national standard for traffic control on all public roads, incorporated by reference into the Code of Federal Regulations at 23 CFR 655. It describes the safe placement of and attire for traffic flaggers (including police officers).

The State of Connecticut has adopted the regulations of the U.S. Dept. of Labor, Occupational Safety and Health Administration, as applicable to all state and municipal employees, including police officers. OSHA's Regulations for Construction, at 26 CFR 1926.201(a), also incorporate the MUTCD: "Signaling by flaggers [including police officers] and the use of flaggers, including warning garments worn by flaggers shall conform to Part VI of the Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices, (1988 Edition, Revision 3 or the Millennium Edition), which are incorporated by reference in § 1926.200(g)(2)."

To recapitulate, Connecticut accepts federal highway funds, and so must train police officers in the MUTCD, which is enforced by the Connecticut Dept. of Labor, Div. of Occupational Safety and Health.

It therefore behooves the State of Connecticut to provide those directing traffic in work zones, including police officers, with the specific training necessary to safely protect themselves and the construction workers in the work zone. Such uniform training makes it easier for drivers to negotiate these hazardous areas.

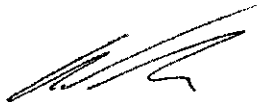
The state Dept. of Transportation's Standard Specifications for Roads, Bridges and Incidental Construction, § 9.70, Trafficperson, contains a requirement that uniformed flaggers must be certified as having completed a flagger training with the American Traffic Safety Services Assn. or the National Safety Council. Basic flagger training covers, among other things, the MUTCD as well as the importance of high-visibility clothing and standardized hand and body motions for traffic control at construction sites. But the specification is silent on any such training for police officers.

The state should be silent no longer.

I believe that the proposed legislation should contain language specifying what is to be taught to our police officers. I propose adding the underscored, at new § 4, line 149 of the bill:

(4) safe traffic control practices described in the most recent edition of the Manual of Uniform Traffic Control Devices, such as the wearing of appropriate high-visibility safety apparel in a highway work zone and the proper location and position of law enforcement officers working in such zone...

Thank you for your consideration of the safety of our police officers.



Walter B. Tucker Jr., CSP, CHST